

References

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PIERIS RAPAE L. AND CARDARIA DRABA [CRUCIFERAE] AS A LARVAL FOODPLANT. — This plant, commonly known as Thanet Cress, a native of S. and C. Europe and Western Asia, was introduced into Britain in 1809, and is now a common plant of roadsides and waste land in N. Kent, especially near the Thames estuary, forming dense clumps with conspicuous masses of white flowers in May and June. On a number of occasions I have observed females of the vernal brood of *P. rapae* laying eggs upon this plant, as at Crayford on June 13th, 1981. In 1979 butterflies were reared from such eggs found at Greenhithe, the larvae being given only Thanet Cress.

On August 12th, 1981, on some waste land close to Dartford Heath, I watched two female *P. rapae* flying purposefully over the tall grasses and at intervals disappear amongst them. Investigation showed that they were seeking somewhat deteriorated plants of Thanet Cress, largely hidden from view, upon which to lay eggs.

It appears that *C. draba*, at least in N. W. Kent, is a significant larval foodplant for both broods of *P. rapae*, although I cannot find reference to *C. draba* as a pabulum for this insect in the textbooks and journals.

A further observation made at Crayford on June 13th, 1981, was that many male *P. brassicae* L. were present and appeared to settle frequently amongst the considerable masses of Thanet Cress. However, this was illusory, for close inspection revealed that they were seeking isolated plants, largely hidden, of common vetch, *Vicia sativa*, upon which to feed. — B. K. WEST, 36 Briar Road, Bexley, Kent.